

Churchmere Medical Group Patient Group

Meeting

Date: 25 February 2026

Venue: Meeting Room, Clayton Health Centre

Present:

Practice Representative: Elaine Ashley (EA), Data & Quality Assurance Manager, Olivia Barker (OaB) Patient Services Manager

Whitchurch: Peggy Mullock (PM), Terrie Hewitt (TH), Janet Howarth (JH), Dorothy Wright (DW), Mike Valentine (MV), Faye Barrow (FB), Bev Duffy (BD), Chris Crowther (CC), John Standerline (JS)

Ellesmere: Sue Francis (SF), Elizabeth Peers (EP), Michael Swanston (MS)

Apologies: Jenny Davies (JD), Managing Partner, Bernise Tasker (BT), Connie Mason (CM), David Cooper (DC)

Resignations: Ruth Bridgwood (RB), Paul Sweetnam (PS)

1 Welcome (meeting opened at 1500 hrs)

Meeting was opened by PM. Round table introductions made and apologies accepted. Ruth Bridgwood and Paul Sweetnam have resigned from the group and we thank them for their time and contributions.

2. Minutes of last meeting

Minutes of last meeting agreed and no matters arising.

3. Actions from last meeting

Ellesmere Help Yourself to Health event – following on from the Women's Health Day in 2025, we are now planning a Men's Health Day.

Women's Health Event – Whitchurch. This was held last Saturday and was very successful with over 30 cervical smears carried out as well as HRT, contraceptive advice and coil/implant fittings and removals. Within the atrium we also had

representatives from our Cancer Care team, Shropshire breast screening service, the Blood Bikes and Peggy, representing the patient group. PM said this was a wonderful opportunity for women to discuss issues in a safe space and many women were very appreciative of the opportunity of attending on a Saturday. PM was able to talk to many women about the health centre and the service and cakes were also provided!

OAB added that the practice will follow a calendar to feature a number of health campaigns with displays in both health centres. Currently, we have displays for breast cancer awareness.

Parking

- Clayton Health Centre - EA reported continued issues with parking at CHC. The 'patient parking' bays are reserved specifically for individuals attending appointments at the health centre. Unfortunately, we do still get spaces blocked for hours by people not visiting the health centre. Spaces are also used by a local building firm. We hold regular meetings with Hazelwood to address the issues and have also reiterated parking on our Facebook page. We have also produced a letter and map which will be placed on vehicles not attending the Practice. We really do not want to enforce parking restrictions with a third party company and we hope that consideration from the general public will avoid this. EA asked patient group members to help push the message regarding parking.

Of note, it does appear that the Hazelwood/Health Centre site has become a dog walking loop and unfortunately lots of people letting their dogs toilet on the grassed areas outside of residents apartments. There will, therefore, be a fence installed to prevent this going forward by Wrekin.

- Ellesmere – MS asked if Ellesmere experienced parking issues. OAB confirmed that as there is very limited parking on site. Our staff generally pay for parking at the Comrades Club – this is a private car park. If patients are using this car park then they would also need to pay the parking charge.

Height adjustable high back chairs – EA reported that we have received donations to purchase two high back chairs for our waiting areas. These are really useful for those patients who have undergone recent orthopaedic surgery or those with mobility problems. One donation was very gratefully received at the end of 2025 and the second chair is on order following a donation from the Friends for Life fundraising group in Whitchurch.

4. Demographic Profile of the Practice

At the last meeting, MV asked if we could share information on the demographic profile of the practice. This was discussed and surprise expressed that the over 70 population was not as high as expected. In general, there is a pretty even

spread across the 10 yearly bands with 50-59 and 60-69 being the highest numbers. The practice does have around 300 patients over the age of 90 years.

The practice list size as increased significantly over the least twelve months (currently >21000) or so due to the increased building. SF suggested that the increase in housing in Ellesmere would have an impact on the practice. MS felt that there was no more building projects in Ellesmere than in Whitchurch.

MV thanked the practice for this information.

5. Closure of POD and new ordering system for patients

OAB said you will all be aware that POD (Prescription Ordering Direct), the Shropshire based system for ordering repeat prescriptions closed in October 2025. The practice were given only 5 weeks notice of closure and to implement a new system and process for our patients.

We do encourage as many patients as possible to order via the NHS app as this is very simple. For those patients that do not have a smartphone or internet connection then we do also have a phone line for repeat prescription orders. Orders can be submitted 24 hours a day, seven days a week. OAB was hoping to share some statistical information from the company today but this information has yet to be received.

We held weekly drop in sessions on both sites with staff available to teach patients how to set up the NHS app and these were very well received.

JS asked why patients put onto a 'repeat dispensing' programme were not notified.

Action: EA will feed this back to the Medicines Management team.

6. PPG drop in sessions

OAB thanked members who had volunteered to attend our PPG drop in sessions which will be from 11 am – 1 pm in March and April. OAB asked that we had 2 members at each drop in session and that we are looking for 'themes' and not individual complaints. OAB will provide further information in due course.

7. Seasonal campaigns

OAB reported that our Remembrance days displays on both sites were very well received. In Clayton Health Centre, we did have our poppy waterfall in the atrium which looked amazing. We will continue to ask for crocheted poppies to add to this display with the hope that each year it will get bigger and better.

At Christmas, we had Christmas Wish Trees. Again these were well received with over 50 'wishes' left.

8. Practice Website

OAB reported that Jess, our Operations Manager, launched our new practice website in 31 December 2025. This is easier to navigate and the link to Anima is at the top of the home page so very easy to find.

OAB asked if all members could have a look at the website and see what they think – www.churchmere.co.uk

9. Flu & Covid vaccination campaign

EA reported that we commenced the flu and covid vaccination campaign in early October 2025. The flu vaccination campaign does run until 31 March and we do still have a limited stock of vaccine available.

The practice held two mass vaccination sessions, one on each site which were very well attended. EA added that the support of patient group members both indoors and in the car park is invaluable and very much appreciated.

JH and FB did comment that they were surprised by the behaviour of some patients that went from 0 to 60 in the blink of an eye. Unfortunately, this is experienced regularly by staff at the practice. OAB added that we do have a process for reporting 'inappropriate behaviour' which can lead to a patient warning or even removal from the practice list.

EA reported that the Practice will not be delivering the Spring covid vaccinations. These will be done via the NHS booking site and eligible patients (over 75 years etc) will receive their invite directly from NHS England. The practice are, however, planning to deliver the Autumn covid vaccinations alongside the flu vaccinations.

JS asked why when he tried to book his Autumn covid vaccination, the practice did not come up as an option. EA confirmed that the Practice appointments are not available via the national booking site. The practice contacts patients directly with a link to book directly with the practice. However, the importance is that all eligible patients receive vaccination wherever it be.

EP asked if we could provide information on where non-eligible patients could obtain private vaccination. EA confirmed that this is not information we hold and we also could not promote one private party over another.

10 Friends and Family Feedback

OAB gave a brief overview of F&F feedback. EA advised that after every appointment, the patient will receive a link to provide this feedback which comprises of two questions. This data is anonymous and does have to be reported back to NHSE by the practice.

OAB also added that the GP survey is now out and if you have received the survey, please could you complete it and encourage any other recipients to complete it. EA reported that the last survey at a very low response rate of around 1% which makes the data statistically invalid. Despite this, the practice does still have to write an action plan on the results.

Actions: Please could group members encourage patients to provide feed
Please encourage patients to complete GP survey if received.

11. Articles for Monthly Newsletters

OAB reported that the February newsletter has been published today. If any group members have any idea/information that would be useful, please contact OAB.

TH asked why the health checks (in this month's newsletter) were advertised for Oswestry and Market Drayton. MS added that these were sponsored by the NFU and trying to target farmers.

Suggestion that we feature different clinicians/services in the practice. OAB added that we have previously run features on the various services available but it is a while ago so we will pick this back up.

Action: OAB clinicians/services features in newsletter

12. Any Other Business

- JS asked about the process for patients getting blood test results – he personally sees his results on the NHS app. EA confirmed that the Practice will contact the patient should a result need any treatment/further action. Otherwise, results are available for patients to see via their online profile. Patients can, of course, contact the practice but we do encourage all patients to use online services.
- MV asked why we did blood tests in Ellesmere but in Whitchurch patients go to Whitchurch Hospital. EA confirmed that this is due to historical funding arrangements. The practice would like to offer more phlebotomy at the Clayton Health Centre but this has to be a planned process and we cannot destabilise any services offered in the community.
- JS reported that a patient has been sent a letter in the post asking them to collect a form from the practice. Why was the form not sent with the letter?

EA not able to comment on an individual instance but this would not be normal practice. JS should ask the patient to contact the practice in order that we could look at this.

- JS asked why a parent could not act for a 15 year old child without consent. EA confirmed that GDPR applies from the age of 13 years, and there are specific rules around consent that would apply.
- JS asked what process were in place to monitor doctors. He cited an example where a patient knew that they were right and the doctor was wrong. EA confirmed that there was robust system in place with revalidation, audits, learning events, supervision. OAB added that we also have a complaints system whereby any clinical complaint is investigated by a senior GP partner
- MV asked about recruitment and retention especially in light of the early discussion regarding behaviour. OAB reported that there is a programme of work taking place with reference to the practice culture. The practice has also recently held a series of meetings with all staff looking at 'rewards' and what motivates them. This is being reviewed at senior partner level. MV expressed his thanks for everything that the Practice is doing.
- MS asked if the practice telephone system lets you know the number you are in the queue. OAB confirmed that it does and also encouraged everyone to use the call back facility. This means that you are not waiting on the phone for your call to be answered and that the phone system will call you back on the number you called on when you reach your place. TH mentioned that calls can 'time out' ie if you do not speak for 20 minutes or so, the call will just terminate. TH advised that if on hold that you periodically speak into the phone so it does not disconnect. OAB and EA had not heard of this before but would consider if this could be a reason why some people so their call has dropped.
- BD reported that letters received in the post are often very delayed and cited a recent example she had experienced. BD asked if letters could be sent via email. EA reported that this is something we are looking into but we do have to be mindful of security. The practice does use a system called Accurx in which an email can be sent to the patient and the patient has to enter their date of birth in order to access the attachment.
- EP suggested that patient group members join the SaTH forums to report/discuss any issues and this is done via Eventbrite. EP will discuss with the person at SaTH who runs these forums and report back to the group.
- JH – link received to book appointment online but if you then cancel that appointment there is no facility to rebook the appointment. You then have

to phone the practice to request a new link. OAB confirmed that this is the case and has been flagged to our provider to try and identify a solution.

- JH – when a clinician/admin/receptionist phones the patient whether it be a telephone consultation or for any other reason, please could we confirm that the person always asks ‘is it ok to talk?’ before proceeding. JH cited an incident where a call was taken by a patient in the car with another person present in the car which was not appropriate. OAB to feed this back.
- OAB – **CONFIDENTIAL** - we have discussed recruitment and retention and we are currently 4 – 5 patient service advisors down. Whilst we continue to recruit, this is difficult and it does then take time to train. The practice have therefore decided to participate in a 2 week trial of AI telephony. This will be an opt in service and at any point the patient can say ‘speak to a receptionist’ and the call will be moved back into the main call queue. The AI system can deal with a whole range of services including cancelling and booking appointments, direction to other appropriate services ie, pharmacy, optician, dentist, 111; providing information on ordering prescriptions etc. OAB asked the group for support during this trial. MV commended the practice in trying to find a solution to the current staff shortages. OAB reminded the group that this remains confidential until all communications have been shared.
- EA – Display cabinet – Dr Ruth Clayton, previous partner at Dodington Surgery, has old medical equipment that we would like to display in the waiting room at Clayton Health Centre. We have received a £200 donation towards this and it is likely that we have a further donation to cover the cost of this.
- EA – NHS App – the practice continues to promote the use of the NHS app and all agreed this was useful to see results, order medication, see letters etc. EA reported an increasing number of requests from patients with online services enabled asking the practice to print out a copy of information for their records. This obviously takes up a lot of staff time and the practice will be encouraging patients to take responsibility for this. Please could the group support with this request.

Actions: discuss use of email communication of letters
Encourage patients to use NHS app/online services

Date of next meeting:

To be confirmed

The meeting closed at 1630 hours